(c) whether it is also a fact that a large number of Afghani nationals are indulging in smuggling activities and if so, how many arrests have been made so far during the last three years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI RAJESH PILOT): (a) As per available information, at present there are approximately 24,662 registered Afghan nationals living in India (Children below the age of 16 years are not required to register under the provisions of the Registration of Foreigners Act, 1939). Government of India is not extending any financial assistance to them.

(b) As per policy, Afghan nationals who have been staying in India are being granted extention of stay on six monthly basis.

(c) Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Refugees from neighbouring countries

5501. SHRI K. RAHMAN KHAN : Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) how many refugees from Srilanka, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Afghanistan and Myanmar are there in the country;

(b) whether these refugees would be asked to go back to their countries or would be rehabilitated in the country with the help of UNCR;

(c) what is the difference between an illegal emigrant and a refugee;

(d) whether Government are treating all Muslim who have come from the above countries as illegal emigrants or some of them are treated as refugees, stating the number of such Muslim refugees; and

people who are harassed as illegal emi-people who are harssaed as illegal smigrants?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI P. M. SAYEED): (a) The estimated number of refugees from various countries residing in India at present nationality-wise are as under:—

S.No.	Name of the country	No. of refugees
1.	Sri Lanka .	87,270
2.	Bangladesh (Chakma/Hajong)	85,982
3.	Myanmar . .	52

About 22,000 Afghans presently living in this country under the mandate of the UNHCR have not been recognised as refugees by the Government of India. There are no refugees in the country who have arrived from Pakistan.

(b) The refugees from Sri Lanka and the Chakma refugees from Bangladesh accommodated in Tripura are being repatriated on a voluntary basis in consultation with the concerned Governments. There is no proposal for the repatriation of the Chakma/Hajong refugees settled in Arunachal Pradesh and the Myanmar refugees. There is no proposal for rehabilitating the refugees with the help of UNHCR.

(c) An illegal immigrant is a person who has entered a country without valid documentation, whereas a refugee is one who is so recognised by the relevant laws.

(d) All persons irrespective of their religion who have entered the country without valid documentation are being treated as illegal immigrants. Such of the persons, irrespective of their religion, who are recognised as refugees are being terated as refugees. No separate figures are being maintained in respect of refugees on the basis of their religion.

(e) The laws of the land provide enough safgeuards to people against any such harassment in case it occurs.